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[REDACTED]

USSR - MIDDLE EAST: Soviets have no new proposals
to break the impasse. [REDACTED]

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USSR - MIDDLE EAST: THE SOVIETS HAVE NO NEW PROPOSALS TO BREAK THE ARAB-ISRAELI DEADLOCK.

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SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS TOLD THE FRENCH DURING CONSULTATIONS IN MOSCOW LAST WEEK THAT ALL APPROACHES TOWARD A SETTLEMENT WOULD BE "FUTILE" UNTIL THE ISRAELIS AGREE TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES. THE SOVIETS APPEARED UNHAPPY WITH THE CURRENT IMPASSE BUT RESIGNED TO A CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO IN VIEW OF ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE. THEY WERE SKEPTICAL OF THE VALUE OF INTERIM TALKS ON A SUEZ CANAL SETTLEMENT AND CONSIDERED THE UTILITY OF FOUR POWER TALKS TO BE SIMILARLY LIMITED.

THE SOVIETS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE MIDDLE EAST PORTION OF THE SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE, WHICH REAFFIRMED SUPPORT FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 OF NOVEMBER 1967 AND FOR THE JARRING MISSION. THE SOVIETS STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE US, AS THE ONLY POWER CAPABLE OF MAKING THE ISRAELIS SHIFT THEIR POSITION ON THE VITAL ISSUE OF WITHDRAWAL, IS THE KEY TO ANY EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT. THE SOVIETS HITHERTO HAVE STATED PUBLICLY THAT THEY WOULD PARTICIPATE, ALONG WITH OTHER PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, IN ANY INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES FOR A SOLUTION BASED ON THE RESOLUTION.

MOSCOW NEVER HAS BEEN SANGUINE THAT THE US AND ISRAEL WERE PREPARED TO MAKE THE NECESSARY CONCESSIONS TO ARRANGE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS AND, IN VIEW OF ITS ASSESSMENT, PROBABLY DOES NOT INTEND TO GET OUT IN FRONT OF THE ARAB NEGOTIATING POSITION.

ON OCCASION IN THE PAST, THE SOVIETS HAVE REVEALED CONSIDERABLE MISGIVINGS OVER THE DOMINANT US ROLE IN ARRANGING AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT OR PROXIMITY TALKS. BECAUSE OF THEIR OPPOSITION TO A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE DEADLOCK, HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS PROBABLY SEE NO OTHER COURSE THAN TO GIVE THE ARABS THE IMPRESSION THAT MOSCOW IS TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE PURSUIT OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

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THE SOVIETS APPARENTLY BELIEVE THAT THE RISKS IN THE AREA ARE MANAGEABLE. THEY EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT SADAT'S STAYING POWER AND CONSIDERED RELATIONS WITH BOTH IRAQ AND SYRIA TO BE EXCELLENT. NEVERTHELESS, IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE FRENCH, THE SOVIETS DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT EGYPTIAN MILITARY LEADERS COULD PUSH SADAT INTO A RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES.

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